

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action dated January 10, 2007 and the references cited therein. Claims 14 and 28 have been amended with claims 14-28 remaining pending in the application. Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Initially, claim 28 stands objected to based on an error in its dependency. Applicant has amended the claim to correct the problem noted by the Examiner.

Turning to the rejections based on the cited references, claims 14-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious in view Fonseca (USP 6,660,950) in combination with Barton (USP 6,501,195). Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 14 as amended is not taught or suggested by Fonseca or Barton either alone or in combination. Accordingly, applicant traverses the rejection.

The Office Action acknowledges that the device of Fonseca does not operate on the basis of the presence or absence of a supply voltage. The Office Action addresses this deficiency in the teachings of Fonseca by citing Barton. The arrangement shown in Barton includes a current sensor resistor which is connected in the supply current circuit through the main device. The voltage drop caused by the resistor is sensed and used to control electronic switches for turning on the voltage for various peripheral devices as soon as the voltage drop across the sensor resistor exceeds a given threshold value. Thus, Barton discloses a type of master-slave device that switches on and off the *line voltage* to peripheral devices based on the status of the main device.


In contrast, the present invention as recited in amended claim 14 involves a switching device with an associated control connector for connecting the switching device to a *computer supply voltage*. The control connector operates to bring the switching device into a first switching state wherein a data connection exists between the PC connector and the remote connector when the computer supply voltage is present and into a second switching state wherein the data connection is interrupted when the computer supply voltage is absent. As is known by those skilled in the art, a computer supply voltage is an internal low voltage

that is used within the computer itself and can be used to power items like a mouse or a keyboard (see, e.g., paragraph [0026] of the application).

Barton does not teach an arrangement where the main device outputs further supply voltages to auxiliary devices. Rather, Barton switches on and off the line voltage (i.e., a 120 VAC power source) to the auxiliary devices. Thus, assuming that Fonseca and Barton were properly combinable, the result would be the PC being connected to the AC main device power outlet of Barton and the data line switch of Fonseca being connected to one of the AC peripheral power outlets of Barton. In such case, the data line switch of Fonseca would be connected to the 120 VAC power source (i.e., a line voltage), not to an internal supply voltage of the computer. Amended claim 14 requires a control connector for connecting the switching device to a supply voltage provided by the computer. Even if combined, Fonseca and Barton do not teach this limitation. Accordingly, amended claim 14 is allowable over the cited references. Dependent claims 15-28 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 14.

Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregory C. Bays, Reg. No. 40,505
LEYDIG, VOIT & MAYER, LTD.
Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 4900
180 North Stetson Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6731
(312) 616-5600 (telephone)
(312) 616-5700 (facsimile)

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